AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method for tracking blood transfusions, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) obtaining identifying information for a patient and providing said patient with a wristband comprising said patient identifying information;

(b) collecting a blood sample from said patient and testing said blood sample to determine the type of blood required by the patient;

(c) allocating from a supply of blood units a blood transfusion unit for the patient, wherein said blood transfusion unit contains the type of blood required by said patient and wherein said blood transfusion unit is marked with an identifying code;

(d) [[labelling]] labeling said allocated blood transfusion unit with a compatibility label, wherein said compatibility label comprises said patient identifying information and said identifying code;

(e) generating a blood unit request slip for the patient, the blood unit request slip including said patient identifying information;

(f) retrieving the blood transfusion unit and verifying the blood transfusion unit's identity by comparing the patient identifying information on the blood unit request slip to the patient identifying information on the compatibility label on the patient allocated blood transfusion unit;

(g) comparing the patient identifying information from the patient's wristband to the patient identifying information on the compatibility label on said patient allocated blood transfusion unit; and

(h) comparing the identifying code marked on the patient allocated blood unit with the identifying code on the compatibility label on said patient allocated blood transfusion unit.

2. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1 including the step of providing an alarm in response to a mismatch between the patient identifying information on the blood transfusion unit and the patient identifying information on the blood request slip when compared.

3. (original) The method according to claim 1 including the step of providing an alarm in response to a mismatch between the patient identifying information from the wristband and the patient identifying information in the compatibility information on the blood transfusion unit when compared.

4. (cancelled)

5. (cancelled)

6. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1 including comparing the blood unit identifying information on the blood transfusion unit with the blood unit identifying information in the compatibility information.

7. (original) The method according to claim 6 including providing an alarm in response to a mismatch between the blood unit identifying information on the blood transfusion unit and the blood unit identifying information in the compatibility information.

8. (original) The method according to claim 7 including transmitting the patient identification information read from the wristband, the blood unit identification information read from the blood transfusion unit and the patient identification information and blood unit identification read from the compatibility label to a computer database.

9. (previously presented) A method for collecting and storing in a computer database information about blood transfusions, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) providing a patient with a wristband having patient identification information encoded thereon and obtaining a blood sample from the patient;

(b) reading patient identification information from the wristband and printing a blood sample identification label, the blood sample identification label including the patient identification information, and applying the blood sample identification label to the blood sample;

(c) transmitting the patient information to a computer database each time a blood sample identification label is printed;

(d) selecting a blood unit suitable for transfusion into the patient from a supply of blood units and marking the blood unit with a unique blood unit identification code;

(e) printing and applying a compatibility label to the blood unit, the compatibility label including the patient identification information and the blood unit identification code;

(f) reading the patient identification information and the blood unit identification code from the compatibility label;

(g) reading the patient identification information from the wristband, and comparing the patient identification information from the wristband to the patient identification information on the compatibility label;

(h) comparing the blood unit identification code on the compatibility label with the blood unit identification code on the blood unit;

(i) providing an alarm if the patient identification information from the wristband does not match the patient identification information on the compatibility label or if the blood unit identification code on the compatibility label does not match the blood unit identification code on the blood unit; and

(j) transmitting the patient identification information read from the wristband, the blood unit identification code read from the blood unit and the patient identification information and blood unit identification read from the compatibility label to a computer database.

10. (previously presented) The method according to claim 9 including the step of generating a blood request slip for the patient, the blood request slip including patient identification information.

11. (previously presented) The method according to claim 10 including the step of comparing the patient identification information on the blood request slip to the patient identification information on the compatibility label.

12. (previously presented) The method according to claim 11 including providing an alarm if the patient identification information on the blood request slip does not match the patient identification information on the compatibility label.

13. (original) The method according to claim 9 including in step (h) the step of verifying that the selected blood unit has been properly stored.

14. (original) The method according to claim 13 including providing an alarm if the selected blood unit has been improperly stored.

15. (cancelled)

16. (cancelled)

17. (cancelled)

18. (cancelled)

19. (cancelled)

20. (cancelled)